GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:528
ANSWERED ON:27.07.2005
INCREASING TELE- DENSITY RURAL AREAS
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the average telephone connections in rural areas of the country at present;

(b) whether the Government is formulating any scheme to increase the tele-density in rural areas;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government has consulted private sector companies in this regard;

(e) whether any target has been fixed by the Government for increasing the number of telephone connections in rural areas; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD)

(a) As on 31-05-2005, there are 1.74 telephones per 100 population in rural areas.

(b) & (c) The office of Administrator, Universal Service Obligation (USO) Fund on the basis of a Tender, has entered in to agreement for provision of telephones on demand in 1, 685 Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs) which are loss making. Most of these SDCAs comprise of Rural areas.

Government is also considering provision of shared public infrastructure in these 1, 685 SDCAs to boost penetration of mobile phones in these areas.

(d) Access Service Lincence condition does not stipulate mandatory Rural Roll-out obligation.

(e) & (f) A target of tele-density of 4% by the year 2010 has been planned as per 10th Five Year Plan.